

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 CEA-01 FRB-03 CIEP-01 SP-02

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9570

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1078

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, XT, EEC

SUBJECT: ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO MEET IN GENEVA ON SEPTEMBER 26

1. SUMMARY: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) WILL MEET IN GENEVA ON SEPTEMBER 26. THE MEETING WILL BE PRECEDED BY A MEETING OF THE ETUC PRESIDUM ON SEPTEMBER 25. PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEMS WILL BE THE FILLING OF VACANCIES AT THE ETUC SECRETARIAT AND PREPARATION FOR THE PROPOSED EC TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE ON EMPLOYMENT. THE FRENCH CGT APPLICATION FOR ETUC MEMBER-
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SHIP WILL NOT BE ON THE AGENDA. END SUMMARY.

2. PURSUANT TO AN EARLIER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION TO HOLD AT LEAST ONE OF ITS MEETINGS OUTSIDE OF BRUSSELS EACH YEAR, THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL MEET AT EFTA HEADQUARTERS IN GENEVA ON SEPTEMBER 26. ACCORDING TO ETUC ASSISTANT SECRETARY JEAN KULAKOWSKI, THE FRENCH CGT MEMBERSHIP ISSUE WILL NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING. KULAKOWSKI TOLD US THAT THE CGT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION WILL PROBABLY REMAIN SHELVED UNTIL SUCH TIME AS ETUC PRESIDENT VETTER MEETS WITH CGT LEADER SEGUY IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISION LAST FEBRUARY (SEE EC BRUSSELS 1153). THUS FAR, VETTER HAS EVADED A MEETING WITH SEGUY CLAIMING SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES.

3. KULAKOWSKI BELIEVES THAT THE VETTER-CGT MEETING WILL EVENTUALLY TAKE PLACE BUT THAT WHEN IT DOES IT WILL NOT NECESSARILY CONTRIBUTE TO FINAL RESOLUTION OF THE CGT QUESTION. KULAKOWSKI ATTRIBUTES THIS TO VETTER'S WELL KNOWN OPPOSITION TO CGT MEMBERSHIP WHICH HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY FORTIFIED BY THE OPPOSITION OF THE ITALIAN NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTERS, PARTICULARLY THE CGIL, TO CGT ENTRY. ADDITIONALLY, THERE HAS BEEN A DISCERNIBLE DECLINE IN ENTHUSIASM AMONG CERTAIN ETUC AFFILIATES WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE CGT BID FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE PAST BUT NOW TAKE A DIM VIEW OF CGT SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNISTS IN PORTUGAL, AND ARE ALSO DISTURBED BY THE CGT'S UNWILLINGNESS TO MODIFY ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNIST WFTU. HERETOFORE, VETTER AND THE FERMAN DGB HAVE BEEN ISOLATED WITH THE FRENCH FO IN THEIR OPPOSITION OF THE CGT. FOR THE TIME BEING, VETTER SEEMS TO BE IN THE DRIVERS SEAT AND IN THE VIEW OF MOST LABOR OBSERVERS HERE, THE CGT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY SIDETRACKED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE BARRING ANY DRAMATIC CHANGES.

4. THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ITEM ON THE SEPTEMBER 26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA WILL BE THE QUESTION OF FILLING VACANCIES AT THE ETUC SECRETARIAT. THE COMMITTEE IS EXPECTED TO APPOINT A NEW ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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TO REPLACE THE LATE ALFRED MISSLIN WHO DIED LAST FEBRUARY. THE ABSENCE OF MISSLIN, WHO WAS CONSIDERED THE WORK HORSE OF THE ETUC STAFF, HAS BEEN DOUBLY FELT BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS ILLNESS OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY WALTER BRAUN WHO HAS BEEN ABSENT FROM BRUSSELS FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. THERE IS SOME DOUBT THAT BRAUN, WHO UNDERWENT MAJOR SURGERY, WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN. THEO RASSCHAERT CONTINUES TO FUNCTION AS GENERAL

SECRETARY, BUT WITH HIS RESIGNATION ALREADY ACCEPTED AND HIS YEAR END DEPARTURE CERTAIN, HIS PERFORMANCE, HARDLY AWE INSPIRING UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, REFLECTS THE LAME DUCK NATURE OF HIS STATUS. THIS LEAVES KULAKOWSKI AND THE INEFFECTIVE ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY, PEER CARLSEN, AS THE ONLY FULLY FUNCTIONING SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS AND BARELY ABLE TO COPE WITH MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF THE ORGANIZATION.

5. REGARDING THE SUCCESSOR TO RASSCHAERT, KULAKOWSKI TOLD US THAT HE IS NOT A CANDIDATE FOR THE JOB ALTHOUGH HE WOULD BE WILLING TO SERVE IF CHOSEN BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, HE THINKS THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE OF THIS OCCURRING BECAUSE OF HIS CHRISTIAN TRADE UNION ANTECEDENTS. HE ALSO TOLD US THAT CARLSEN IS ACTIVELY SEEKING THE JOB ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DETECT ANY REAL ENTHUSIASM FOR CARLSEN'S CANDIDACY OUTSIDE THE LATTER'S NATIVE DANISH LO. KULAKOWSKI EXPECTS THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO AT LEAST NAME A REPLACEMENT FOR MISSLIN AT THE GENEVA MEETING, BUT HE IS SOMEWHAT DOUBTFUL THAT A SUCCESSOR FOR RASSCHAERT WILL BE CHOSEN BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

6. MUCH OF THE SEPTEMBER 26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE DEVOTED TO PREPARATION FOR THE PROPOSED EC TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE ON EMPLOYMENT WHICH THE ETUC HAS ADVOCATED FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. LAST JULY, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL "ACCEPTED THE IDEA" OF HOLDING THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WOULD INVOLVE REPRESENTATIVES OF TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS AND THE MINISTERS OF LABOR AND FINANCE FROM THE NINE MEMBER STATES (SEE EC BRUSSELS 6426). THE COUNCIL DID NOT SPECIFY A DATE FOR THE CONFERENCE BUT THE ETUC HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECOMMENDED THAT IT BE HELD IN DECEMBER.
GREENWALD

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